



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 29 December 2008

Current Nationwide
Threat Level is



[For info click here](http://www.dhs.gov/)
<http://www.dhs.gov/>

- The Cherry Hill Courier-Post reports that National Guardsmen and State Police will no longer patrol New Jersey's three nuclear power plants. (See item [8](#))
- According to the Knoxville News Sentinel, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation said Friday that an ash spill at a TVA power plant in Kingston has contaminated area waters above regulatory limits for drinking water, though none has made its way into the city's water treatment plant. (See item [31](#))

DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report Fast Jump

Production Industries: [Energy; Chemical; Nuclear Reactors, Materials and Waste; Defense Industrial Base; Dams](#)

Service Industries: [Banking and Finance; Transportation; Postal and Shipping; Information Technology; Communications; Commercial Facilities](#)

Sustenance and Health: [Agriculture and Food; Water; Public Health and Healthcare](#)

Federal and State: [Government Facilities; Emergency Services; National Monuments and Icons](#)

Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: ELEVATED,
Cyber: ELEVATED

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *December 28, KITV 4 Honolulu* – (Hawaii) **HECO investigates cause of power outage.** Hawaiian Electric Co. (HECO) crews restored power to most of Oahu by Saturday afternoon, officials said. HECO reported that power had been restored to most of its 295,000 residential customers. HECO officials said there is still much they do not know about why Oahu lost power in the first place. There was a thunderstorm happening when four major transmission lines tripped off at about 6:35 p.m. on Friday. At a briefing on Saturday afternoon, HECO said the lines showed no sign of lightning fires. A lightning bolt's near miss could have put enough excess electricity into the line to trip the breakers, but the failure of the system happened after the lines tripped, while engineers failed in an effort to balance the amount of power being generated to the

number of customers needing electricity. One factor may have been the timing of the problem. It was right at the peak hour for electrical usage. The company was also reluctant to use the tripped lines until they were inspected at daylight. When the power went out at the Honolulu Airport, officials called their electricians to work. By 9:45 p.m., two-thirds of the airport was operational. In the long term, the state hopes to spend several million dollars in two to three years to build a power plant in a partnership with HECO that would supply electricity only to the airport.

Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28399812/>

See also:

http://www.starbulletin.com/news/20081228_Airport_reaction_pleases_officials.html?page=1&c=y

2. *December 26, Reuters* – (Montana) **Montana refineries operating after Thursday fires.** Montana refineries owned by ConocoPhillips and Cenex were operating Friday morning after fires on Thursday, according to the companies. A fire broke out Thursday afternoon in a unit “that aids in the production of gasoline” at Conoco’s Billings, Montana, refinery, said a Conoco spokesman. “Refinery operations remain normal, with the exception of the unit in question, which has been shut-in,” he said in a statement Friday morning. Early Thursday morning, fire broke out in the ultra-low sulfur diesel hydrotreating unit at Cenex’s Laurel, Montana, refinery, said a Cenex spokeswoman on Friday morning. Only the diesel hydrotreater was shut by the blaze, she said. “We continue to study what the cause of the fire was,” she said. “We don’t have any definitive timeframe yet for restarting the unit.” There were no injuries reported due to the Conoco fire. One person was treated for minor injuries due to the Cenex fire.
Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssEnergyNews/idUSN2629990320081226>
3. *December 24, Associated Press* – (Colorado) **Energy company agrees to pay \$138,000 in fines.** An energy company that wanted to drill close to the site of an underground nuclear explosion has agreed to pay \$138,000 in fines for alleged violations at its former operations in Western Colorado. The state cited Houston-based Presco Inc. last year for stormwater-control and other violations. State records show the company did not admit the violations but agreed to pay the fines. In January, the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission will consider the agreement reached by its staff. Two environmental groups and two couples have filed a lawsuit seeking a hearing on the state’s approval of drilling permits within three miles of the blast site at Rulison, about 190 miles west of Denver. State staffers said inspections of Presco’s wells last year turned up several problems, including runoff from storm water and drilling waste pits flowing into a creek. They also reported finding drums and sacks of chemicals floating in pits.
Source: <http://www.chron.com/dispatch/story.mpl/ap/tx/6180619.html>
4. *December 23, Reuters* – (Louisiana) **OSHA probes complaint at Exxon Baton Rouge refinery.** U.S. worker safety regulators are investigating working conditions at the nation’s second-largest refinery during Hurricane Gustav in early September, according to officials on December 23. A spokeswoman for the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration said the agency is investigating a complaint about safety at

Exxon Mobil Corp.'s Baton Rouge, Louisiana, refinery filed in early September, but declined to provide further details. The president of the local union representing workers at the refinery said the complaint was filed after workers had to manually shut refinery units in 90-mile-per-hour winds after electrical power to the refinery was knocked out by the storm on September 1.

Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssEnergyNews/idUSN2354053420081223>

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Chemical Industry Sector

5. *December 26, WJW 8 Cleveland* – (Ohio) **Truck driver killed in accident in Akron; Hazmat on scene.** The director of communications for the city of Akron told Fox 8 News that a male truck driver for a local delivery company was killed in an accident Friday morning. The accident happened at approximately 7 a.m. near Hampton Hills Metro Park. In addition to dealing with the fatality of the driver, authorities also had to deal with the fact that the semitrailer spilled a small amount of sulfuric acid. Hazmat was on the scene, attempting to stop the leak. The director of communications for the city of Akron said that the chemical was not going into any waterway. An Akron Fire Department spokesperson told Fox 8 News that the truck had 3,000 gallons of sulfuric acid in it, and that they brought in another tanker to siphon it out.
Source: <http://www.myfoxcleveland.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=8146858&version=4&locale=EN-US&layoutCode=TSTY&pageId=3.2.1>
6. *December 24, Kansas City Star* – (Missouri) **Chemical tank catches fire.** Firefighters kept a two-alarm blaze in a chemical tank from spreading to an attached manufacturing plant Wednesday night in Kansas City. A roughly five-story tank containing a petroleum-based flammable liquid caught fire about 5:15 p.m. at the Bayer CropScience plant, the fire battalion chief said. He said the tank's capacity was about 4,000 gallons but that, fortunately, it was nowhere near full at the time of the fire. A private, on-site fire brigade started applying foam to the fire until Kansas City firefighters reached the scene, the fire chief said. Southern Platte Fire Protection District crews also responded. After ensuring all hazardous runoff was contained, firefighters placed the blaze under control shortly after 6 p.m. Firefighters called a second alarm because of potential for the fire to spread. About 50 firefighters were at the scene.
Source: http://www.kansascity.com/news/breaking_news/story/951856.html
7. *December 23, WAVY 10 Hampton Roads* – (Virginia) **Another chemical spill possible.** Tank 201 sits in a crumpled pile of metal on the property of Allied Terminals in Chesapeake, Virginia, destroyed when two million gallons of liquid fertilizer poured out of the collapsed container. Security cameras caught the industrial accident on tape, when unsafe welds gave way under the pressure of the liquid. The fear now is that another tank could collapse, this time tank 209, which is across the street from the original accident. The city's fire chief found the same problems on tank 209 — weak welds that could give way. The chief had the tank “declared an unsafe structure and an imminent danger constituting an emergency.” Allied Terminals was told “you are hereby notified

to remove the contents of the Tank 209 within 15 days.

Source:

http://www.wavy.com/dpp/news/local_news/local_wavy_chemical_spill_follow_20081222

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Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector

8. *December 27, Cherry Hill Courier-Post* – (New Jersey) **Private security to handle NJ's nuke plant patrols.** National Guardsmen and State Police will no longer patrol New Jersey's three nuclear power plants. The state attorney general says that enhanced private security and a new video monitoring system at the plants will suffice. The video monitoring system used has thermal imaging capabilities and can provide views of the perimeter. It feeds images directly to the state's Regional Operations and Intelligence Center. National Guardsmen have patrolled outside Oyster Creek in Forked River and the Salem and Hope Creek Nuclear Generating Stations in Salem County since October 2001. During the last seven years, Oyster Creek and Salem/Hope Creek have spent more than \$82 million combined on capital security improvements.
Source: <http://www.courierpostonline.com/article/20081227/NEWS01/812270323/1006>
9. *December 27, Plain Dealer* – (Ohio) **Davis-Besse shutdown.** FirstEnergy Corp. expects its Davis-Besse nuclear power plant to begin generating power early this week, after a Christmas Eve shutdown, a spokesman said. A reactor operator making a routine inspection early Wednesday found an oil leak on the floor of the turbine building, the non-nuclear side of the plant. Operators began shutting down the reactor. Engineers on Friday found that a clog in the lubrication system for the turbine's bearings caused the leak. U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission inspectors were on hand, a FirstEnergy spokesman said. Crews were cleaning and reassembling the oil system Friday, and operators planned to slowly ramp up the reactor to generate sufficient steam to test the turbine over the weekend, he said.
Source: <http://www.cleveland.com/business/plaindealer/index.ssf?/base/business-11/123038460947690.xml&coll=2>
10. *December 26, Reuters* – (Missouri) **Ameren Mo. Callaway reactor returns to full power.** Ameren Corp.'s reactor at the Callaway nuclear power station in Missouri ramped up to full power as of early Friday, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission said in its daily plant status report. The unit, which was shut on December 15 due to an electric fault on a condensate pump, was restarted on Tuesday and operating at about 42 percent of capacity on Wednesday.
Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssIndustryMaterialsUtilitiesNews/idUSN2629817420081226>
11. *December 24, Reuters* – (Massachusetts) **Entergy's Mass. Pilgrim reactor back to full power.** Entergy Corp.'s Pilgrim nuclear power station in Massachusetts returned to full power as of early December 24, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission said in its

daily plant status report. The unit was operating at 23 percent of capacity early December 23 as it continued to ramp up after being shut late Friday when snow and ice conditions led to a reactor trip.

Source:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssIndustryMaterialsUtilitiesNews/idUSN2425463220081224>

12. *December 24, Reuters* – (Arkansas) **Entergy Arkansas 1 nuclear reactor climbs to 98 pct.** Entergy Corp.'s Unit 1 at the Arkansas Nuclear One power station in Arkansas ramped up to 98 percent of capacity as of early Wednesday, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission said in its daily plant status report. The unit, which exited an October 26 refueling outage nearly three weeks ago, was manually shut down on Saturday after an unplanned partial insertion of one of eight control rod banks, a company spokesman told Reuters earlier last week.

Source:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssIndustryMaterialsUtilitiesNews/idUSN2424648120081224>

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

13. *December 25, Strategy Page* – (National) **Expensive new headgear can't take a bump.** So many JHMCS (Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing Systems) have been damaged in use that the U.S. Navy and Air Force have had to develop new repair methods to get the dinged ones back into action quickly. Otherwise, pilots were likely to have a shortage of the high-tech, and very useful, JHMCS helmets. The improved repair program also came up with changes in how the helmets are manufactured, which made them more resistant to damage. So far, the U.S. Air Force and Navy have bought several thousand JHMCS systems for F-16s, F-18s, F-15s, and by F-22s. The JHMCS allows a pilot to see, displayed on his visor, critical flight and navigation information. Most importantly, the pilot can turn his head towards a target, get an enemy aircraft into the crosshairs displayed on the visor, and fire a missile that will promptly go after the target the pilot was looking at. Each JHMCS costs about \$60,000. Before the new repair methods (costing about a thousand dollars per helmet) were developed, many damaged helmets were simply junked. The most common damage was the display and associated electronics getting knocked out when the helmet hit the canopy, caused by violent maneuvers during training, or combat.

Source: <http://www.strategypage.com/htm/htatrit/articles/20081225.aspx>

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Banking and Finance Sector

14. *December 28, CNN* – (National) **Wachovia settlement checks real, Better Business Bureau says.** The Better Business Bureau is assuring individuals who recently received a check from a federal court in Pennsylvania that the checks are legitimate and part of a

settlement agreement with Wachovia Bank related to telemarketing fraud. The agency said it has been receiving calls from consumers concerned about the legitimacy of the \$149 checks and confused why they are included in the settlement. The checks are part of a \$150 million settlement Wachovia agreed to in U.S. District Court in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the bureau said in a press release. “These checks are legitimate and consumers who receive them can safely deposit the check in their banking account or cash the check at a Wachovia branch,” said the president of the Better Business Bureau of Southern Piedmont in Charlotte, North Carolina. Wachovia began mailing checks in varying amounts to about 742,000 consumers on December 11, according to the U.S. attorney’s office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. Regulators said the settlement agreement arose from banking arrangements that Wachovia had with telemarketers to process payments for product orders made over the telephone.

Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2008/US/12/25/wachovia.checks/>

15. *December 27, Washington Post* – (International) **Accounting standards wilt under pressure.** World leaders have vowed to help prevent future financial meltdowns by creating international accounting standards so all companies would play by the same rules, but the effort has instead been mired in loopholes and political pressures. In October, largely hidden from public view, the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) changed the rules so European banks could make their balance sheets look better. The action let the banks rewrite history, picking and choosing among their problem investments to essentially claim that some had been on a different set of books before the financial crisis started. The results were dramatic. Deutsche Bank shifted \$32 billion of troubled assets, turning a \$970 million quarterly pretax loss into \$120 million profit. And the securities markets were fooled, bidding Deutsche Bank’s shares up nearly 19 percent on October 30, the day it made the startling announcement that it had turned an unexpected profit. The change has had dramatic consequences within the cloistered world of accounting, shattering the credibility of the IASB — the very body whose rules have been adopted by 113 countries and is supposed to become the global standard-setter, including for the United States, within a few years.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/12/26/AR2008122601715.html>

16. *December 23, Associated Press* – (National) **Analysts alarmed by IndyMac backdating infusions.** Upon learning that a federal regulator helped a troubled thrift look more financially stable than it was shortly before it collapsed, analysts said it is worrisome to think that more banks have been able to hide their problems. It was revealed Monday that a regulator in the Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS) in May approved a backdated infusion of \$18 million for IndyMac Bancorp, a big thrift that failed in July, costing the federal insurance fund for banks nearly \$9 billion. The Treasury Department’s inspector general also found that OTS had allowed other thrifts to record capital infusions in an earlier period than when they were received. Other banks skirting close to their minimum required capital levels may also have been allowed such leeway by regulators, misleading investors about their financial health, said a banking industry consultant.

Source: http://ca.us.biz.yahoo.com/ap/081223/banks_regulatory_failure.html?.v=2

Transportation Sector

17. *December 28, Honolulu Advertiser* – (Hawaii) **Travelers stranded by blackout.**

Hundreds of travelers were making their way off the island Saturday after Friday's blackout caused airlines to cancel or delay more than a dozen flights at Honolulu International Airport. United Airlines canceled five flights — two to Los Angeles, two to San Francisco, and one to Denver Friday night. Hawaiian Airlines canceled 10 interisland flights out of a total of 170 interisland daily flights Friday. Some Hawaiian Airlines flights were delayed, the longest for 25 minutes, according to airline officials. Several other airlines delayed flights. Backup generators at the airport kicked in shortly after the power went out, and runway lights and the traffic control tower were up, allowing 10 flights to land and another 10 to take off, according to the state Department of Transportation. Airline employees found creative ways to get around the loss of power. Hawaiian Airlines checked in customers by calling their offices on Neighbor Islands and in Los Angeles where personnel used their computer terminals.

Source:

http://www.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/20081228/NEWS01/812280360/1190/LOCA_LNEWSFRONT

18. *December 27, KMGH 7 Denver* – (Colorado) **Power outage hits airport.** A partial power outage at Denver International Airport (DIA) caused some long lines during a busy holiday travel day. Officials report a power outage hit the south side of the main terminal at DIA at 8:45 a.m. Officials said power was restored three hours later. Xcel Energy reported that a bad cable was to blame for the outage. Xcel Energy crews repaired the cable and are investigating a cause currently. Almost 200 customers in the area were also without power. The three gate terminals at the airport and the control tower were not affected. What was affected was the security area on the south side of the airport. As a result of the loss of power to the area, the Transportation Security Administration security checks had to be done manually. Wait times were estimated to be 45 minutes to get through security during the morning. Security personnel had to hand search bags and wand people down. The airport estimates 155,000 travelers passed through DIA on Saturday.

Source: <http://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/18366499/detail.html>

19. *December 26, Reuters* – (Texas) **Dense fog halts Houston channel shipping.** Dense sea fog was keeping about 40 ships from entering or exiting the Houston Ship Channel to the busiest U.S. petrochemical port on Friday morning, according to the U.S. Coast Guard. The shutdown began on Thursday morning when ship pilots stopped steering vessels through the 60-mile waterway to refineries and petrochemical plants in Houston and Texas City, Texas, after fog reduced visibility to unsafe levels, the Coast Guard said. Twenty-one ships were waiting to enter the ship channel from the Gulf of Mexico, and 19 were waiting to exit on Friday morning.

Source:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/domesticNews/idUSTRE4BP25M20081226?feedType=RSS&feedName=domesticNews>

20. *December 26, Sun-Times News Group Wire* – (Illinois) **Plane becomes stuck in snow at Midway.** Passengers had to be removed from an airplane at Midway Airport Friday morning after the aircraft became stuck in snow on the shoulder of a taxiway. About 9:20 a.m., Southwest Airlines flight No. 688 bound for Los Angeles became stuck while maneuvering from a taxiway to Runway 13 C in preparation for takeoff, a Chicago Department of Aviation spokesman said. The right main gear became stuck in snow sitting on the shoulder of the taxiway while the aircraft was moving at a low rate of speed. No one was injured during the incident, and the aircraft's passengers were deplaned and taken back to the terminal, where they will be boarded onto another flight. Runway 13 C had been closed after the incident but was re-opened at about 11 a.m. after the aircraft was moved to Southwest Airline's hangar, according to the spokesman. The accident did not impact other flights at the airport, but Midway is experiencing an average of 30 minute delays due to low visibility caused by fog, he said. It is not immediately clear how the plane became stuck.

Source: <http://www.suntimes.com/news/transportation/1350343,w-midway-airport-plane-122608.article>

21. *December 25, Associated Press* – (International) **Germans save Egyptian ship from Somali pirates.** A German military helicopter chased away pirates who were trying to board an Egyptian ship Thursday off the coast of Somalia. One of the ship's crew was shot in the attack. The bulk carrier with 31 crew members was passing through the Gulf of Aden on its way to Asia when gun-toting pirates in a speedboat began pursuing it, said a spokesman of the International Maritime Bureau's piracy reporting center. In response, the German navy frigate Karlsruhe dispatched a helicopter. The pirates fled as the chopper reached the vessel, according to a statement from the German military, but not before shooting and injuring one of the ship's crew. A second helicopter, carrying a medical team, retrieved the injured crewmember, who is now receiving treatment on the Karlsruhe, the statement said.

Source: <http://www.wjla.com/news/stories/1208/580403.html?ref=rs>

22. *December 25, WRC 4 Washington, D.C.* – (Illinois) **D.C. bound plane skids off taxiway in Chicago.** An American Airlines plane bound for Washington skidded off the taxiway at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport Wednesday night. An American Airlines spokesperson said flight 1544 headed to Reagan's National Airport left the gate at 6:42 p.m. As it was getting into position to take off around 7:15 p.m., the MD 80 hit an icy patch and slid sideways off the runway onto the grass. An airline spokesman in Fort Worth said none of the 54 passengers or five crew members were injured and all were taken by bus back to the terminal. The plane was blocking the way to the runway, and a Chicago Aviation Department spokesman said officials with the National Transportation Safety Board had to inspect the aircraft before it could be moved. The spokesman called the incident "nothing spectacular" and said the plane is still in place until workers can assess if the landing gear is in the mud and if the plane needs to be lifted from the location.

Source: <http://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/D-C-Bound-Plane-Skids-Off-Taxiway-In-Chicago.html>

23. *December 24, Associated Press* – (Washington) **Deicer fumes affect plane passengers at Sea-Tac.** Fumes from a chemical used to deice airplanes got into the passenger cabin of an Alaska Airlines plane Wednesday at Sea-Tac Airport and irritated the eyes of passengers and the crew, officials said. Paramedics treated 26 people and seven — all five crew members and two other airline employees on board — decided to go to a hospital, said an airline spokeswoman. None of the injuries appeared serious. All 143 passengers decided to board another plane and continue their flight, she said. The problem developed as Flight 528 was preparing to take off for a flight to Burbank, California. The spokeswoman said there have been no other deicer problems during a week of snow in the Seattle area, and that it is unknown how the fumes entered the plane. Doors are normally closed during deicing and the ventilation system is running. Source:

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/S/SEA_TAC_DEICER?SITE=NYONE&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT

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Postal and Shipping Sector

24. *December 25, Agence France-Presse* – (International) **White powder sent to U.S. embassy in S Korea: police.** An envelope containing white powder was mailed to the U.S. embassy in Seoul last week and is being tested for possible toxins, South Korean police said December 25. Eighteen other U.S. embassies have received white powder this month, as well as more than 40 governors' offices in the United States. Initial tests showed the substance was harmless, but the deliveries sparked security alerts. South Korea's National Police Agency said an envelope postmarked Texas was delivered to the embassy Wednesday morning and has been taken away for testing. The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said most tests showed no harmful substance but details would be revealed after further examination. The embassy in Seoul is the second U.S. mission in Asia to have received the substance, after Tokyo.

Source: <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j4IJ5ogBKzP-OkQsDyYjM84-2Khw>

25. *December 25, Reuters* – (International) **U.S. embassy in Turkmenistan gets white powder mail.** The U.S. embassy in Turkmenistan was on high alert on December 25 after receiving a package containing suspicious white powder. U.S. embassies in up to 20 countries have received envelopes containing suspicious white powder since December 8. In most missions the packages were found to be harmless.

Source:

http://www.rferl.org/content/US_Embassy_In_Turkmenistan_Gets_White_Powder_Mail/1363663.html

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Agriculture and Food Sector

26. *December 26, Reuters* – (International) **Mexico suspends purchases from 30 U.S. meat plants.** Mexico has suspended purchases from 30 U.S. meat plants, some of which are the largest in the country, in what may be retaliation for the United States implementing a country-of-origin labeling (COOL) law, industry sources said on Friday. However, a meat trade group said the bans could be related to some point-of-entry violations that arose this autumn. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on Friday listed the affected plants on its website, but the suspensions became effective on Wednesday. The listed plants produce beef, lamb, pork, and poultry. The banned plants are owned by leading U.S. meat companies, including Cargill Inc, Tyson Foods Inc, JBS, Seaboard, and Smithfield Foods, according to the list on USDA's website. A reason was not given for Mexico's action, but some U.S. analysts believe the country is retaliating for the labeling law. Under the law, which became effective this year, supermarket meat packages must carry labels stating the countries where the meat animals were raised. Many U.S. meat plants had been warned by Mexico earlier this year of alleged "point of entry violations" and Friday's suspensions could be related to that, said a spokesman for the U.S. Meat Export Federation.
Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/marketsNews/idUSN2627030920081226>
27. *December 25, U.S. Food Safety and Inspection Service* – (Missouri) **Missouri firm recalls sausage product for possible listeria contamination.** T. Piekutowski European Style Sausage, a St. Louis, Missouri, firm, is recalling approximately 750 pounds of sausage products that may be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced Thursday. The sausage products were produced on December 18, 2008 and sold at the establishment's retail counter in St. Louis, Missouri. Consumers may have purchased these sausage products on December 18 and 19, 2008. The problem was discovered through FSIS routine microbiological testing. FSIS has received no reports of illnesses associated with consumption of this product.
Source: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Recall_052_2008_Release/index.asp
28. *December 25, Sun-Times News Group Wire* – (Illinois) **Firefighters extinguish extra-alarm fire at meat-packing plant.** A Chicago South Side meat-packing plant containing hazardous chemicals burned for approximately three hours on Christmas Day before more than 160 firefighters extinguished the blaze. The blaze, which was elevated to a 3-11 alarm, was called after a fire started inside the plant about 11:45 a.m., the fire media affairs director said. Firefighters arrived on the scene and heard loud noises coming from the plant, and saw rail cars full of animal fat near the burning plant. The chemicals prompted the department to call for a Level 1 HazMat response, and they decided to fight the blaze from the exterior of the plant. A combination of weak walls, and a collapsing roof, also made it impractical for firefighters to enter the burning facility. It took the effort of about 165 firefighters using dozens of engines, trucks, and support vehicles to extinguish the fire about 1:30 p.m., the director said. Firefighters were able to contain the fire to the plant, and it did not spread to the animal fat in the rail cars. Commonwealth Edison was called to shut off power to the plant as well as other industrial buildings nearby as a precaution. The cause of the fire is under investigation.
Source: <http://www.suntimes.com/news/metro/1349501,w-meat-packing-plant-fire->

29. *December 24, USAgNet* – (National) **FDA planning to ban cattle brains, spinal cords from all animal feed.** According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, federal authorities are accepting comments on a planned regulation that would prohibit use of some cattle tissues in all animal feeds by late April. The regulation published by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is intended to reduce the risk of transmission of bovine spongiform encephalopathy by prohibiting use of brains and spinal cords from cattle 30 months and older in all animal feed. The materials are already prohibited from use in feed for ruminants, including cattle, sheep, and goats. The regulation would also ban from animal feed the entire carcasses of all BSE test-positive cattle, the entire carcass of any cow 30 months or older that is not inspected and passed for human consumption and from which the brain and spinal cord is not removed, tallow derived from the prohibited materials that contain more than 0.15 percent insoluble impurities, and mechanically separated beef derived from the prohibited materials, according to information from the FDA.

Source: <http://www.usagnet.com/story-national.php?Id=2979&yr=2008>

30. *December 24, USAgNet* – (National) **Study suggests warmer temperatures could lead to boom in corn pests.** Climate change could provide the warmer weather pests prefer, leading to an increase in populations that feed on corn and other crops, according to a new study. Warmer growing season temperatures and milder winters could allow some of these insects to expand their territory and produce an extra generation of offspring each year, said the Purdue University associate professor of earth and atmospheric sciences who led the study. He said, “The greatest potential range expansion was seen with the corn earworm, which is known to infest other high-value crops such as sweet corn and tomatoes. Warming could allow populations to survive the winter in the upper Midwest, the key region for corn production, as well as areas of the West where other high-value crops are grown.” He explained, “Ethanol production and a growing world population are increasing demand for corn. Expansion of the pests’ ranges could have substantial impacts through decreased yields and increased costs for seed and pest management.” The research team studied the potential end-of-the-century distributions of the corn earworm, *Heliothis zea*; the European corn borer, *Ostrinia nubilalis*; northern corn rootworm, *Diabrotica barberi*; and western corn rootworm, *Diabrotica virgifera virgifera*. The corn earworm is of particular concern because it is migratory and pesticide resistant. The team used a high-resolution climate model, believed to have the greatest detail currently available for the United States, to project daily temperatures for specific regions. The National Science Foundation and National Aeronautics and Space Administration partially funded this research.

Source: <http://www.usagnet.com/story-national.php?Id=2987&yr=2008>

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Water Sector

31. *December 26, Knoxville News Sentinel* – (Tennessee) **Water near TVA power plant contaminated by huge ash spill.** The Tennessee Department of Environment and

Conservation (DEC) said Friday evening that an ash spill at a TVA power plant in Kingston, Tennessee, has contaminated area waters above regulatory limits for drinking water, though none has made its way into the city's water treatment plant. "All samples received to date indicate that the water entering the Kingston Water Treatment Plant meets public health standards," a department spokeswoman said in a statement. The spill at the Tennessee Valley Authority's Kingston Fossil Plant on Monday dumped 5.4 million cubic yards of fly ash and water into the adjacent neighborhood and clogged the Emory River. The spokeswoman said TVA conducted the tests and informed DEC of the contamination. She also said DEC has agreed to the emergency installation of a submerged weir across the channel of the Emory River to slow the flow of water and capture the material. "We have no indication of acute or immediate risk based on contact with the material, as long as it is not eaten," she said. "It is premature to speculate on long-term impacts of the material or potential exposure pathways." She said a sampling plan is being prepared.

Source: <http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2008/dec/26/state-water-near-tva-power-plant-contaminated-huge/>

32. *December 23, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* – (National) **39 groups protesting coal ash rule change.** Thirty-nine environmental groups are urging the U.S. President-elect to reject a pending federal rule that will make it easier to dispose of coal combustion waste from power plants in abandoned mines despite risks of water contamination. The groups say coal ash has already polluted water in 23 states and the new rule would open the way for more pollution by failing to require consideration of risks to human health and the environment before new disposal sites are approved. They say stronger regulation of the coal ash and "common sense safeguards" to prevent drinking water contamination, as recommended by a 2006 National Academy of Sciences review, is warranted.

Source: <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08358/937012-113.stm>

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Public Health and Healthcare Sector

33. *December 26, Associated Press* – (Texas) **With Galveston's trauma center still closed, officials worry about medical preparedness.** A petrochemical industry official has called for the University of Texas System to reopen the trauma center at its Galveston medical branch, which has been closed since Hurricane Ike, because of concern about adequate medical care in the event of an industrial disaster. Officials at the nearest trauma centers, in Houston, share the concern. Ike caused an estimated \$710 million in damage to the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) when it came ashore September 13. Only about \$100 million was covered by insurance. The UT System board of regents has laid off 3,000 employees and reduced the number of beds at the medical school's hospital from 550 to 200. Hospital facilities are slowly reopening, but the Level 1 trauma center remains closed. With UTMB's center closed, the closest Level 1 trauma centers are at Houston hospitals Memorial Hermann and Ben Taub General, which has no helicopter landing pads.

Source: http://www.star-telegram.com/state_news/story/1112353.html

34. *December 25, Contra Costa Times* – (California) **2 laws seek to curb ‘superbug.’** Patients may see more warning in California hospitals about a potentially deadly drug-resistant bacteria, and more of them may be tested for it, as medical facilities work to comply with two new state laws going into effect January 1. The laws are aimed at stemming the spread of methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA). In January, hospitals will be required to screen certain patients for the MRSA bacteria, including those who are scheduled for inpatient surgery and may be susceptible to infection, and those who have been in the hospital or a nursing home within the last 30 days. Patients will also be screened if they are being admitted to an intensive care or burn unit, or if they are receiving dialysis. The law also requires hospitals to report infection rates to the state Department of Health Services, which will eventually make this information public in 2011. South Bay hospital officials said they are implementing some new safety measures, but that many of the new regulations are already in place. Despite the risk within hospitals, the majority of this bacteria is in the community, said the regional director for infection prevention and control at Kaiser Permanente Southern California. Source: http://www.contracostatimes.com/california/ci_11311761
35. *December 24, Associated Press* – (Massachusetts) **Mass. hospitals cutting down ER waits.** State public health officials say emergency room waits are decreasing at many Massachusetts hospitals as they prepare to comply with a new state rule prohibiting ERs from turning away ambulances. Some ERs reroute ambulances to other hospitals if they are overcrowded. Last month, ERs were closed for 232 hours, less than one-quarter as often as at the beginning of the year. As of January 1, hospitals must stop those temporary ER closures, called diversions, in almost all cases. The Boston Globe reports Wednesday that many hospitals are finding ways to speed the flow of patients through their emergency departments, including hiring more nurses and doctors. Doctors and others in the industry say the new system will be better for patients. Source: <http://wbztv.com/massachusettswire/22.0.html?type=local&state=MA&category=n&file=MA--HospitalDiversion.xml>

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Government Facilities Sector

36. *December 28, FOCUS Information Agency* – (International) **Gaza protesters in Syria burn Israeli, U.S. flags.** Israeli and American flags were burned as thousands of people demonstrated in central Damascus on Sunday against Israel's air onslaught on the Gaza Strip, Syrian television pictures showed, Agence France-Presse informed. A major security operation was put in place around the U.S. embassy, around 1.5 miles from the scene of the protest, an AFP correspondent said. Source: <http://www.focus-fen.net/index.php?id=n164743>

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Emergency Services Sector

37. *December 24, FCW.com* – (National) **FEMA releases guideline for first responder ID cards.** The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has released guidance for credentialing first responders that does not mandate a federal technical standard for identification cards. Instead, the agency is asking state and local agencies to voluntarily follow the rules. In a 25-page draft of the National Incident Management System Guideline for the Credentialing of Personnel, FEMA encourages state and local governments to voluntarily adopt interoperable identification credentials. It posted the document online December 23. “The guideline describes specific authority and best practices for managing interstate disasters and integrates the credentialing process within the Incident Command System,” the document states. The guideline covers police, fire, and medical response agencies; mutual aid; and private emergency workers who restore power, water, and other services. FEMA did not recommend the adoption of a federal technical standard for employee identification cards, such as Federal Information Processing Standard 201. In a separate notice dated December 22, FEMA said it would accept public comments on the guideline until January 21, 2009. Source: <http://www.fcw.com/online/news/154761-1.html>

38. *December 24, United Press International* – (Texas) **Personal info of Katrina victims leaked.** The U.S. government said private details of 16,857 Louisianans who sought refuge from Hurricane Katrina in Texas were mistakenly published on the Web. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) confirmed in a statement that names, Social Security numbers, and phone numbers of the 16,857 people who applied for benefits were published on two privately run Web sites as a result of an “unauthorized breach of private information,” the (New Orleans) Times-Picayune reported Wednesday. FEMA said the information leak is being investigated and the agency currently believes a Texas state agency is responsible for leaking the information. “FEMA believes that most of the applicant information posted on the Web sites was properly released by FEMA to a state agency which requested and received this information to fulfill routine needs following Hurricane Katrina,” the agency said. The Texas agency and the Web sites that published the information have not been released by FEMA. Source: http://www.upi.com/Top_News/2008/12/24/Personal_info_of_Katrina_victims_leaked/UPI-18851230177906/

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Information Technology

39. *December 26, MX Logic* – (International) **New worm with evolved tricks.** Security officials and blogs issued a warning about the Waledac worm making the holiday rounds through a spam email urging users to visit a website claiming it has a Christmas card addressed to them. The malicious link in the email, if clicked, infects machines with malware, and the first signs of it were spotted December 21, SCMagazineus.com reports. Once in the machine, the worm searches for email addresses and then sends spam email copies of itself to others. Some of the elements of the Waledac worm shared some similarities with the Storm Worm, such as using a redirection site and the ability to hide its IP address. The Storm has the tendency to spread near holidays such as New

Year's and Mother's Day. However, the similarities end with the absence of "a peer-to-peer network to communicate and instead uses an open-source executable packer and cryptography to hide its tracks," according to the article. While the potential for the Waledac worm to spread remains low because of its late-holiday release, SMBs are urged to block the download of ecard.exe to protect against the malicious spam email.

Source: <http://www.mxlogic.com/securitynews/spam/new-worm-with-evolved-tricks556.cfm>

40. *December 24, IDG News Service* – (International) **Microsoft redirect aids boost fake anti-virus scam.** A new player has entered the fake anti-virus market with a little bit of help from Microsoft and the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. Over the past four days, the scammers have used so-called redirector links on Web sites belonging to magazines, universities and, most remarkably, the Microsoft.com and IRS.gov domains, said the director of research in computer forensics with the University of Alabama, who first reported the activity on his blog. Many Web sites use redirector links to take visitors away from the site, although the Web site operators try to stop them from being misused by scammers. For example, the Google URL <http://www.google.com/search?q=idg&btnI=3564> uses Google's "I'm feeling lucky" feature to send Web surfers to IDG.com. If criminals can use a redirector on a major Web site like Microsoft's or IRS's, however, they can make their malicious links pop up very high in Google search results, said the director. "Microsoft is a super-powerful site as far as search engine weight is concerned," he said. The bad guys have tricked search engines into returning their malicious links to tens of thousands of search terms, he said. They have done this by using special software to add these redirector links to "tens of thousands of blog comments, guestbook entries, and imaginary blog stories all around the Internet," the director said in his blog posting. A Google search for the term "Microsoft Office 2002 download" yields a Microsoft.com redirection link as its first result. That link had been redirecting visitors to a malicious Web site, which launched Web-based attack code against victims and tried to trick them into downloading fake antivirus software, he said. However, Microsoft has now fixed the problem, so the Microsoft.com link that pops up in the Google search results was no longer taking surfers to the malicious Web site.

Source:

<http://www.techworld.com/security/news/index.cfm?newsID=108803&pagtype=all>

41. *December 23, Computerworld* – (International) **Free anti-virus scanner hit by bug.** Windows users are under threat from a bug in Trend Micro's free online virus scanning service, warn security researchers. Attackers able to dupe users into visiting a malicious Web page could exploit a vulnerability in the custom ActiveX control that Trend Micro distributes to users of its free HouseCall service, said Danish bug tracker Secunia in an alert. HouseCall bills itself as a free scanning tool that checks "whether your computer has been infected by viruses, spyware, or other malware." "The vulnerability is caused due to a use-after-free error in the HouseCall ActiveX control (Housecall_ActiveX.dll)," said Secunia's warning. "This can be exploited to dereference previously freed memory by tricking the user into opening a web page containing a specially crafted 'notifyOnLoadNative' callback function." Trend Micro has fixed the flaw in the

ActiveX control and patched the public HouseCall servers, but it noted that the latter has not been extensively tested, and essentially waived responsibility if it turns out not to be sufficient. “This hot fix was developed as a workaround or solution to a customer-reported problem. As such, this hot fix has received limited testing and has not been certified as an official product update,” Trend Micro said in its own advisory. “Consequently, this hot fix is provided ‘as is.’ Trend Micro makes no warranty or promise about the operation or performance of this hot fix nor does it warrant that this hot fix is error free.” Users running Microsoft Corp.’s Internet Explorer — the only browser that requires the ActiveX control — should run Version 6.6 of the service, rather than the older HouseCall 6.5, said Secunia. Companies running HouseCall Server in-house should request the HouseCall 6.6 Hot Fix Build 1285 update through their normal support channels, Trend Micro advised. Secunia rated the vulnerability as “highly critical,” the second-highest ranking in its five-step scoring system.

Source:

<http://www.techworld.com/security/news/index.cfm?newsID=108742&pagetype=all>

42. *December 23, BBC News* – (National) **U.S. questions net overhaul plans.** Plans to offer hundreds of new Web addresses as alternatives to .com have been criticized by the U.S. government. The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) has floated plans for the radical change to the existing system. But the U.S. Commerce Department has questioned both the benefits and the costs of such a scheme. Officials have also raised concerns about whether the plans will destabilize the current system. In a letter sent two weeks ago, a Commerce Department official questioned ICANN’s proposed pricings for the new addresses. The net body planned to offer between 200 and 800 new addresses for sale at \$185,000 per domain with a yearly cost of \$60,000. But the official said ICANN needed to “articulate a clear rationale for the proposed fee structure.” She also called on the net body to supply evidence that the changes would “not compromise the stability or security of DNS (Domain Name System).”

Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/7797206.stm>

Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at soc@us-cert.gov or visit their Website: <http://www.us-cert.gov>.

Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

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Communications Sector

43. *December 23, ORegister* – (California; Hawaii) **Time Warner’s O.C. phone outage felt in Hawaii.** Intermittent telephone service among Time Warner Cable customers in Orange County, California, for the past week has been fixed, a spokesman said December 23. The outage was due to a router rebooting three times. The cause is still under investigation. Time Warner’s digital phone service operations are based in Orange

County and serve San Diego, Hawaii, and the desert cities. The telephone outage in Hawaii spurred a report December 23 by FierceTelecom.com, a mobile news site: “Oceanic Time Warner Cable doesn’t know how many of its 65,000 digital phone customers are affected and the severity of the problem, but it said intermittent phone service started about a week ago in California. Outages can run anywhere from one to 20 minutes at a time.” The spokesman disagreed that the outage affected 65,000 people. “The system has been stable since we found a problem,” he said. “There have been no reports of instability with that router.”

Source: <http://gadgetress.freedomblogging.com/2008/12/23/time-warriors-oc-phone-outage-felt-in-hawaii/7004/>

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Commercial Facilities Sector

44. *December 26, Associated Press* – (Oklahoma) **Southern Okla. casino evacuated after bomb threat.** Authorities say they did not find any explosives in the WinStar World Casino near the Oklahoma-Texas state line after someone called in a bomb threat. A spokesman of the Chickasaw Nation Lighthorse Police says employees and patrons were allowed back inside early Friday morning. The casino is again operating as usual. Bomb dogs were brought in to scour the premises. No other buildings were evacuated. The casino employs more than 2,400 full- and part-time workers and was working on an expansion to become Oklahoma’s largest casino, according to its Web site.

Source: <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/ap/tx/6182089.html>

45. *December 26, KAJO 1270 Grants Pass* – (Oregon) **Bank scare.** A non-explosive device placed in the overnight deposit box of the People’s Bank in Central Point was cause for evacuation. At about 9 a.m. Christmas Eve, a teller discovered the device and called Central Point Police to investigate. The bank was evacuated while bomb technicians from the Jackson County Sheriff’s office and the Oregon State Patrol inspected the device. After a closer look, officials with the Central Point Police Department say they determined that the device was non-explosive. After an hour or so the bank was allowed to resume business as usual. An investigation into the hoax is continuing.

Source:

http://www.kajo.com/news/local/stories.php?subaction=showfull&id=1230305670&archive=&start_from=&ucat

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National Monuments & Icons Sector

46. *December 25, Associated Press* – (Oregon) **Forest Service revising rules for pipeline.** The U.S. Forest Service plans to alter its environmental standards to allow a proposed \$800 million natural gas pipeline to run through 47 miles of Mount Hood National Forest. The proposed Palomar pipeline would require opening a path measuring 120 feet wide. The path would stretch through forest areas that have been protected from clearcutting and other disturbances under the department’s management plans. The

Forest Service also would have to revise other rules, such as limiting cutting around Wild and Scenic designated Clackamas River, spotted owl habitats, and recreational areas. The pipeline is a joint venture of Northwest Natural Gas Co. and TransCanada Corp. Construction is scheduled to start in November 2011. If approved, it will feed into a natural gas network east of the Cascades and extend across 217 miles. Supporters of the project say it would provide a much-needed alternative to a natural gas pipeline running through the Columbia River Gorge and into the Willamette Valley.

Source: http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/393733_pipeline26.html

47. *December 23, Associated Press* – (Montana) **Avalanche danger closes Yellowstone’s Sylvan Pass.** The east entrance into Yellowstone National Park over Sylvan Pass has been shut down to all traffic due to avalanche danger — only a day after it first opened for the winter season. Access over Sylvan Pass has been a point of contention in recent months between park administrators, who say it is a safety risk, and officials in Wyoming who say the route is vital to the Cody-area economy. A compromise last summer led the park to drop a plan to quit maintaining the pass during winter. The park deputy superintendent says closures will continue as avalanche dangers warrant. Meanwhile, recent snowfalls led park officials on Tuesday to open all interior roads where snowmobiling is allowed. Much of the interior had remained shut to snowmobiles at the start of the winter season on December 15.

Source:

http://www.montanasnewsstation.com/Global/story.asp?S=9571926&nav=menu227_2

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Dams Sector

48. *December 26, Lansing State Journal* – (Michigan) **BWL set to consider Old Town dam’s future.** North Lansing Dam in Michigan might be restored as a source of hydro power or be demolished in an attempt to return the Grand River to a more natural state. A report on options for the dam and how much repairs would cost is expected to be in the hands of the Lansing Board of Water and Light in the first quarter of 2009, said a BWL spokesman. So far, four possible futures have emerged for the dam: maintain it as is; reoutfit the dam as a hydro generator of electricity; remove the top part of the dam, lowering the height of it by about 4 feet and allowing small watercraft through; turn the dam into rubble, turning it into a small rapids.

Source: <http://www.lansingstatejournal.com/article/20081226/NEWS01/812260323>

49. *December 26, Times-Picayune* – (Louisiana) **Officials call Bayou St. John a flood protection liability, but New Orleanians call it a ‘treasure.’** The mouth of Bayou St. John, for officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Orleans Levee District, represents a point of vulnerability. Their priority is simple: keep storm surge from Lake Pontchartrain at bay, and prevent the transformation of a natural waterway into a highway for delivering floodwater to New Orleans’ heart. But for an alliance of New Orleanians, the junction of the bayou and the vast lake represents much more than a flood protection issue. The infusion of brackish waters from the Pontchartrain, allowed at only an incremental level for decades, is critical to improving and sustaining the

health of a waterway important to residents' quality of life — and central to the story of the founding of New Orleans. Such sentiments were much in evidence one recent November evening as the Corps called a hearing at the University of New Orleans. Federal officials were preparing to announce whether, as a flood protection measure, they would permanently seal off the mouth of the bayou from the lake. The Corps announced it would not attempt to seal off the bayou, opting instead to raise the sector gate structure an additional foot to improve flood protection. The Corps says it is responsible only for flood protection aspects of the gates and has no say in their operation. The Orleans Levee District, which controls use of the gates, along with a small stretch of the bayou from the gates to the outdated dam, dismisses the suggestion, saying the gates were never meant to be opened and closed regularly. Complicating decisions about water-level management are the bayou's multiple layers of jurisdiction. The Corps is responsible for maintenance of the current sector gates. But operation of the gates and oversight of the bayou from the gates to an outdated dam structure at Robert E. Lee Boulevard — left out of the federal flood control system when the new gates were built in 1992 — falls under the levee district's jurisdiction.

Source:

http://www.nola.com/news/index.ssf/2008/12/while_corps_of_engineers_sees.html

50. *December 24, Associated Press* – (Washington) **Illegal dams pose potential problems.** State officials began investigating illegal dams after discovering several while reviewing aerial photos of their own projects last spring. In recent years, five dams built without permits and inspections have failed in Washington, causing flooding and property damage. A comprehensive review of the Yakima Valley showed a number of orchard owners had built ponds for irrigation and frost control without obtaining the necessary permits. The review then expanded to other Eastern Washington agricultural areas, then to the rest of the state. “We ended up with nearly 600 potential dams from looking at the aerial photos,” the supervisor of dam safety for the state Department of Ecology in Olympia said. “We didn’t know for sure they were dams, but we suspected they were.” Of those 600 sites, 96 were identified as “high hazard,” with three or more homes downstream. State officials have inspected 95 of the 96 and confirmed 68 dams. Thirty posed a major risk to residents downstream.

Source:

http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2008555163_illegaldams24m.html

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